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# Labor INFORMATION BULLETIN

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JULY 1941

Health and National Defense

Textile Workers Union of America

Effects of Crowded Housing Upon Health

The Food Stamp Program

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF LABOR
BUREAU OF LABOR STATISTICS · WASHINGTON

# Labor INFORMATION BULLETIN

BORIS STERN
Editor

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF LABOR
FRANCES PERKINS, Secretary


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# Health and National Defense

By PAUL V. McNUTT *

War today is less and less a struggle between fighting armies confronting each other and more and more a contest between all the people of the nations engaged in warfare. The major aim of modern war strategy is to disrupt the industries which supply the armed forces and to demoralize civilian life. This is total war; and it demands total defense. Factories, the workers they employ, and other civilians must be protected against bombs. But if defense is to be complete and if the workers are to devote their full strength to national self-protection, they must also have safeguards against everyday hazards on their jobs and in their homes.

Doctors and scientists have learned far more about protection against needless risks of illness and accident than we have ever put into effect. The challenge has always been to use the knowledge we have to protect and to improve the health of the American people. The national emergency now confronting us has made health protection doubly imperative. We must attack the problem on a broad front—through prevention and treatment of contagious and other diseases, through improvements in nutrition, through protection against accidents, and through a broad program of health protection in industry.

## INDUSTRIAL HYGIENE

Even in ordinary times the hazards of accident and disease take a tremendous and unnecessary toll. On an average day, about 5 million persons are disabled by sickness. During the course of a year, sickness and disability cost the American people nearly 2 billion days of absence from work, school, or household duties. Industrial accidents alone kill 17,000 workers annually in the United States, injure permanently 75,000, and temporarily disable 1,400,000.

During past years, in spite of knowledge buried in laboratory files, the slow poisons of mercury and lead and the insidious dust of factory and mine have taken their steady toll, without any assistance from bombers. Nearly 1 million workers in this country are handling lead and its compounds, and another 50,000 are handling mercury and mercury compounds. Step by step these dangers are being lessened by the mutual action of public health authorities and industry and labor.

These risks are not confined to occupations which the public ordinarily thinks of as hazardous or as related to national defense. In the fur-felt-hat industry, for example, mercury compounds are used to fix the felt. Fumes and dust from these compounds have produced a slow poisoning in many of the industry's 22,000 workers. Two investigations, conducted by the United States Public Health Service's Division of Industrial Hygiene, showed that the only method of control was the substitution of harmless compounds for mercury, and industrial chemists have developed such substitutes.

Recently representatives of the fur-felt-hat industry and of organized labor met in Washington with Surg. Gen. Thomas Parran and agreed to regulations which, if passed by the States, will eliminate poisonous mercury compounds from hat manufacture. Model State regulations prohibiting the use of mercury compounds after December 1, 1941, have been drawn up by the industry and the State of Connecticut. Other States in which the Nation's hat industry is concentrated include Massachusetts, New York, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania. Their State health officers have agreed to seek adoption of these regulations, and Surgeon General Parran has urged all other

* *Federal Security Administrator and Coordinator of All Health, Welfare, and Related Activities in National Defense.*

State and Territorial health officers to request similar legislation.

Advances in commercial and military aviation have focused attention upon physical disabilities affecting fliers. Studies of fatigue among truck drivers have been translated into tests for airplane pilots. The effect of high altitudes and rapid changes in altitude is also being studied, and research to determine what levels of altitude require the administration of oxygen is in progress. Valuable work has been done in the prevention and relief of compressed-air sickness. Administration of a helium-oxygen mixture, better than oxygen alone, by a machine which automatically releases the exact amount needed by a particular individual, is the latest development. The National Institute of Health hopes to build a new laboratory equipped with coordinated decompression and refrigeration machinery, which will exactly simulate flight conditions at high altitudes and will thus promote further research.

Special mobile units have already been set up by the United States Public Health Service as "trouble shooters" in matters of industrial hygiene and safety. These units consist of a physician, an engineer, and a chemist specially trained in the detection and control of industrial hazards. They are prepared to go anywhere in the country on short notice to provide technical consultation with State and local health agencies. Additional consultants will soon be available to the Army for safety programs in Government operated or owned munitions plants. Cooperation has also been established with other Government agencies, particularly the Division of Labor Standards of the Department of Labor.

Briefly, the industrial-hygiene program has these objectives:

Study and control of the various health hazards resulting from exposure to dusts, fumes, gases, and vapors.

Provision of advisory services to industry in construction of safe new plants or renovation of old ones.

Promotion of physical examinations and medical services for the workers, in order that the benefits of preventive and curative medicine may be applied promptly to their individual health problems.

Control of communicable diseases among workers, through a program developed in connection with the general public health service of the community.

## COMMUNITY PROTECTION

But health protection for workers on defense jobs is only part of the picture. Behind both the soldiers and the workers is the great mass of civilians. National defense changes their lives and will, undoubtedly, increase the health hazards they must face. At least a million and a half persons have already been uprooted from their usual lives by defense activities of various kinds. Huge populations are mushrooming where before there was only a handful of people. Near defense industries and Army cantonments, "boom towns" with virtually no health services are faced with tremendous problems relating to medical care, hospital facilities, sanitation, and safe milk and water. Even worse, migration and overcrowding aggravate the threat of contagious disease. Mobilization for defense has sharpened long-term problems. It has opened our eyes to the enormous and often needless waste of strength, efficiency, and even life itself that results from inadequate public health protection.

Since defense is a national responsibility, the people of defense communities can rightfully expect the Federal Government to carry part of the health-protection burden. But health is also a local responsibility; and communities themselves must organize to provide basic health services—safe water, adequate sewage disposal, housing, immunization, and quarantine for the control of communicable disease. These basic health services cost far less than the treatment of disease. Prevention is cheaper and easier than cure.

Leadership and guidance in public health programs are always available to the States through the United States Public Health Service. This Federal service has already made reconnaissance surveys of 300 or more areas affected by defense activities, and gone vigorously to work with the State departments of health to provide them with adequate public health personnel. The Congress of the United States has appropriated special funds to aid State and local health improvement in emergency areas. Under the community facilities bills, recently passed by Congress, Federal funds may be made available to build hospitals and sanitation systems, as well as other community facilities, in defense towns that cannot provide for these essential needs out of their own local funds or resources.

## NUTRITION PROBLEM

Another major factor in the Nation's health is nutrition. "Food will win the war" was a familiar slogan in 1918. Since then, more than 20 years

PROPORTION OF AMERICAN FAMILIES LIVING ON GOOD, FAIR, OR POOR DIETS
FAMILIES WITH GOOD QUALITY DIETS
FAMILIES WITH FAIR QUALITY DIETS
FAMILIES WITH POOR QUALITY DIETS
EACH SYMBOL REPRESENTS 2 PERCENT OF THE FAMILIES IN THE UNITED STATES
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF LABOR
BUREAU OF LABOR STATISTICS
BASED ON UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE ESTIMATES

of research have made it even more evident that food will win the peace and defend our democratic way of life—and not merely more food, but also the *right* food for health and vigor.

The first National Nutrition Conference for Defense was recently held in Washington under the auspices of the Federal Security Agency and the National Advisory Committee on Nutrition. The findings revealed at this meeting of approximately 900 nutrition leaders stressed the need for an aggressive attack upon the problem of undernourishment.

Something more than 40 percent of the American people are not getting enough food or the right kind of food—and this in spite of the facts that we have the greatest food resources in the world and that the foods of which we have a so-called surplus are the very ones we ourselves need.

About one-fourth of our people are getting a really good diet, even when measured by lower standards than those to which we would subscribe today.

If everyone could have an adequate diet instead of an average diet, it would add 10 years to our active life span.

Out of a million young men given physical examinations under the Selective Service System, 380,000 were found unfit for general military service. It is estimated that perhaps one-third of the rejections were due either directly or indirectly to nutritional deficiencies. The high rate of Selective Service rejections for physical disability points not only to widespread undernourishment, but also to other serious gaps in health protection They reveal past neglect of physical defects in children and adolescents. While exact figures are lacking, it is clear that many of these young men could have passed their physical examinations if their defects had been cared for while they were growing up.

If people who now can spend only 5 cents a meal for food per person could spend 10 cents, another 35 to 40 million acres of farm land would have to be devoted to food production and our food expenditures would increase by about 2 billion dollars. Add to these needs at home acute British shortages, and it becomes essential that the United States direct its agriculture to producing more of the nutritionally needed foods.

Free school lunches for children from underprivileged families, low-cost milk schemes, and the "food stamp" system for distributing so-called surplus foods have been tried out and have proved of great practical value. But none of these methods is as yet reaching all the needy people to whom this kind of food would mean added health and strength.

As a guide to improving the Nation's food standards and eating habits, the Food and Nutrition Committee of the National Research Council presented to the Nutrition Conference the first authoritative measure of what a good diet should provide. This "dietary yardstick" can be translated into easily available foods for any part of the country, and can be adjusted to the needs of different age groups and occupations. In general,

a daily diet which would measure up well by this nutritional yardstick would include: One pint of milk for an adult and more for a child; a serving of meat (and the cheaper cuts are just as nutritious); one egg or some suitable substitute, such as navy beans; two vegetables, one of which should be green or yellow; two fruits, one of which should be rich in vitamin C, found abundantly in citrus fruits and tomatoes; some butter or oleomargarine with vitamin A added; breads, flour, and cereal, most or preferably all whole grain or enriched.

Another important step toward improving American nutrition is the development, during recent months, through joint efforts of Government agencies and the milling and baking industries, of bread and flour "enriched" by the addition of essential vitamins. Enriched flour and bread are already on the market in some parts of the country, and by the end of this year Government regulations prescribing "enrichment" will be in full effect.

In addition to endorsing the "dietary yardstick" and the enriched flour and bread project, the Nutrition Conference made significant recommendations which should serve as a basis for a sound and truly Nation-wide nutrition program. Among others, its proposals include:

Vigorous and continued attack on the fundamental problems of unemployment, insecure employment, and rates of pay inadequate to maintain an American standard of living.

Full use of practical devices, such as the Food Stamp Program, free school lunches, and low-cost milk distribution, which will bring nourishing, adequate meals to those who could not otherwise afford them, and at the same time help to distribute food surpluses at a fair return to the farmer.

Efforts to improve food distribution, including processing, marketing, packaging, and labeling, to bring about greater real economies for the consumer. These efforts would include vigorous prosecution of illegal practices.

Encouragement of greater production of the foods needed in more abundance—milk and milk products, eggs, vegetables, fruits, and, in the case of many families, lean meats.

Vigorous and continuous research to add to our present knowledge of all aspects of nutrition, and more widespread education of doctors, dentists, social-service workers, teachers, and other professional workers in the field of nutrition.

## SUMMARY

Adequate food, safe water, proper sewage disposal, and reduction in industrial hazards and communicable diseases—all these are our peacetime responsibilities. But in times of national crisis these public-health obligations are quickened and intensified. But so, too, are opportunities. In ordinary times the public is likely to take its health—and its ill health—for granted. But when sweeping changes are made in the daily lives of millions, when industrial and military mobilization reveals gaping holes in the public-health program, science is called in to plug the gaps as rapidly and securely as possible.

We must not stop there. Perhaps in the past, when medical knowledge was limited in comparison with what we know today, people had no alternative but fatalism. They had no choice except to think of "health" as the absence of obvious disease or disability, and they considered themselves fortunate if they achieved even this negative measure of well-being. Today we have a more dynamic conception of health—a positive goal of maximum vigor, strength, and stamina for all the people. Like most great social goals, we may perhaps never reach this full ideal. But we do have the means to make tremendous advances toward it. Whatever the future holds, we shall have need thus to conserve our human resources. In Dr. Parran's words, "We must make America strong by making Americans stronger."

That is what the United States Public Health Service and our State and local health services are working for. Doctors and scientists, in both public and private service, are working harder and more effectively than ever before. Air-raid shelters, bombed cities, poisoned water supplies, or epidemics caused by wartime conditions, may never come to America. But if they should, this country will be well equipped to protect its citizens.

Meanwhile, we are building up our health defense. What each of us, as citizens in our local communities must do, is to make sure that *our* State and *our* city are doing their part in utilizing *now* what we now know about health protection. The Federal Government can help and is helping. But protecting and improving health is *everybody's* business. Enemies of health do not attack an impersonal government. They attack the men, women, and children in your own town. It is for you and your community to say whether they will win, because our defenses are down, or whether we shall build strong, effective health protection for the people of our own towns, our own States, and our own Nation.

# Effects of Crowded Housing Upon Health

ROLLO H. BRITTEN

U. S. Public Health Service

Poor housing and poor health go hand in hand. On this there is universal agreement. It is also well recognized that there are certain essentials of a healthful home environment. These include a sufficient supply of pure water, sanitary sewage disposal, sufficient ventilation, heat, and light, space enough for ordinary family living, absence of excessive dampness, screening against mosquitoes and flies, freedom from fire and other accident hazards, and adequate playgrounds in the sunshine for children.[1]

Health is more than the mere absence of outright disease; it is a state of being in which all physical and mental processes approach their highest efficiency. That is possible only under satisfactory conditions of housing. Wherever living quarters are crowded and sanitary facilities inadequate, diseases have a greater chance to spread and afflict larger numbers of individuals.

The serious dangers to health associated with overcrowding were revealed most thoroughly in the findings of the National Health Survey based on a house-to-house canvass of approximately 2,500,000 white persons residing in 83 cities of the United States.[2] The number of rooms per person in the family dwelling was used as a yardstick for measuring the degree of crowding. Thus, a family of four with two bedrooms, a living room, and kitchen would be classified as having one person per room. A family of six with the same four-room quarters would have one and one-half persons per room. Basements or attics not used for living quarters and baths were excluded.

The survey suggested that as a rule families lived in crowded, insanitary dwellings because they could not afford better quarters. It was almost invariably persons and families on relief or those with incomes of less than $1,000 a year who lived in substandard, congested houses and who were most exposed to communicable diseases.

## SPREAD OF DISEASES

Data were examined on certain diseases that might be expected to show some relation to housing. These diseases included pneumonia, influenza, rheumatism, and the communicable diseases of childhood. In practically every instance it was found that these diseases struck with greater frequency families living in crowded quarters than those living in relatively uncongested houses.

*Pneumonia.*—This disease is spread principally by personal contact with infected individuals or by the circulation of the germ in dried sputum and dust. Exposure to cold in ill-heated, ill-ventilated dwellings is believed to break down bodily resistance and increase the danger of contracting the disease.

It is not surprising, therefore, that a marked increase in the frequency of pneumonia was observed as living quarters became more congested. This was particularly true for families on relief and nonrelief families barely able to sustain themselves. Within the relief group the frequency rate—the number of cases of sickness per thousand persons—was about 60 percent higher for families with more than one and one-half persons per room than for those with one person or less per room. In the low-income nonrelief families the pneumonia rate in the most congested houses was 45 percent higher than in dwellings where crowding did not exist to any appreciable extent.

*Influenza.*—Marked association was observed between the degree of crowding and the frequency of influenza for persons between the ages of 25 and 65. Among those on relief in this age group the influenza frequency rate was almost a third greater and for those with incomes of less than $1,000 per year nearly a fourth greater in families living in most overcrowded conditions. For all ages combined, the relief group showed an increase of 19 percent in frequency as the degree of crowding increased from one person or less per room to more than one and one-half persons per room. The corresponding increase among the

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[1] *The fundamental requirements of a healthful home environment are set forth in* Basic Principles of Healthful Housing, *published by the Committee on the Hygiene of Housing, American Public Health Association, May 1939.*

[2] *Britten, Rollo H., and Altman, Isidore:* Illness and accidents among persons living under different housing conditions: *Data based on the National Health Survey. Pub. Health Rep., 56: 609 (1941). Reprint No. 2253.*

low-income, nonrelief group was 22 percent.

*Tuberculosis.*—Crowded living quarters, malnutrition, and fatigue render individuals highly susceptible to the ravages of tuberculosis. These conditions also facilitate the spread of the disease through contagion.

The study revealed that the rate of tuberculosis increased as crowding became more pronounced. It was particularly true for children under 15 years of age. For all income groups covered by the survey, the tuberculosis frequency rate for children under 15 was 170 percent higher among families averaging more than one and one-half persons per room than among families where there was not more than one person per room.

*Childhood diseases.*—Almost every boy and girl sooner or later contracts one or more of the common childhood diseases, such as measles, whooping cough, diphtheria, chicken pox, mumps, scarlet fever, or German measles. In conditions of extreme crowding, however, these diseases, according to the survey, appear to attack children at an earlier age and involve a greater risk of serious complications or even death than where crowding is less pronounced. In other words, children living in congested quarters are more likely to contract these diseases at an earlier age. It is generally recognized that a younger age incidence is accompanied by greater risk of serious complications and of mortality.

## SANITARY FACILITIES

Widespread lack of inside flush toilets in poor dwellings prompted a comparison of the prevalence of certain digestive diseases such as indigestion, diarrhea, typhoid, and similar illnesses among families in these dwellings with households which have inside flush toilets. It was found that the frequency rate of sickness from these diseases was almost 70 percent higher among families living in dwellings where no flush toilets existed than in dwellings which had such sanitary facilities. The rate was twice as high in the case of typhoid fever.

For all of these types of digestive disorders believed to be caused in greater or less degree by insanitary conditions, the frequency rate among the relief group of families was 37 percent higher among those who did not have inside flush toilets than among those who did. For nonrelief families with small incomes the rate was 35 percent higher.

## HOME ACCIDENTS

On the average, accidents in the home are more likely to occur in houses or apartments where rooms are dark, ill-ventilated, and ill-heated, and where the hazards from fire, falls, and other causes are great. Dwellings in such dilapidated condition are available at cheaper rent and often are the only type of housing that relief and low-income families can afford.

The survey disclosed that the home accident rate was 70 percent higher in apartments or tenement dwellings renting for less than $10 than in dwellings renting for $30 or more per month.

## CONCLUSION

Differences of income, race, education, intelligence, and housekeeping efficiency influence to a greater or lesser degree the effects of overcrowding upon health. For example, two families may live under equally congested conditions, but by practicing personal cleanliness and good housekeeping one family may render itself far less susceptible to illness and disease induced by overcrowding than the second family, which pays little or no attention to cleanliness.

Sometimes low income causes or perpetuates disease through lack of an adequate diet, proper medical care (at home or in institutions), and other essentials of healthful living. With low income also often goes exposure to unhealthful occupations. Frequently a disease lowers the income level of a family by disabling wage earners temporarily or permanently. As a consequence of these inextricably interwoven factors, persons badly housed have excessive rates of illness and mortality quite apart from the influence of the housing conditions themselves.

Despite the impossibility of assessing the precise effect of housing conditions upon health, however, the National Health Survey has established an important broad connection between housing and health. Illness rates are higher in congested households, especially for certain types of diseases. Disabling digestive diseases are substantially more frequent in households without a private inside flush toilet, and serious home accidents rise with a drop in rental value of dwellings. The survey demonstrated most clearly that high illness rates occur in the low-income, poorly housed groups of families, who are least able to take the necessary preventive measures or to meet the burden of disease.

# Textile Workers Union of America

EMIL RIEVE, President

Although the textile industry has in the past always been a low-wage industry, it need not necessarily remain a low-wage industry in the future. Like the workers in coal, steel, oil, automobile, and other important industries, textile workers want to share the riches of our country, enjoy the opportunities of our industrial system, and exercise freely the rights of industrial citizenship. To translate into reality these desires and aspirations of American textile labor is the primary aim of the Textile Workers Union of America.

The T. W. U. A. is the outcome of a long series of efforts to organize textile workers. As early as in the 1820's, textile workers protested against long hours, low wages, and exhaustive work loads. The history of cotton and woolen textile mills throughout the last century is dotted with unsuccessful attempts by workers to form a permanent labor organization. It was not, however, until 1900 that a national union of textile workers, the United Textile Workers of America was organized.

During the first World War the membership of the United Textile Workers of America grew to approximately 100,000, and it succeeded in reducing the hours of work to 48 per week for the northern cotton-textile industry. But the depression of 1920 and strikes both in the North and in the South weakened the organization to such a degree that it did not recover until 1933.

The upsurge of unionism at the time of the adoption of the National Industrial Recovery Act followed by the industry codes again increased the membership of the United Textile Workers, this time to a peak of nearly 230,000. However, the union resources did not prove sufficient to withstand the unsuccessful general strike called in 1934. Again membership declined rapidly and the union was nearly wrecked.

In 1935 the United Textile Workers joined with seven other national labor organizations in the formation of the Committee for Industrial Organization. In an agreement signed on March 7, 1937, it secured the full cooperation of the C. I. O. in an organizational drive for the textile industry. The Textile Workers Organizing Committee was formed to coordinate and pool the resources of the U. T. W. A. and the C. I. O. behind the textile drive. The T. W. O. C. became a separate textile organization, but worked in closest cooperation and harmony with the United Textile Workers of America.

By September 1937, after the organizing drive had been under way for 5 months, 155,000 textile workers had been brought under union contracts with textile firms. Strikes were avoided, but when they were found inescapable to protect labor interests, they were fought with all available strength.

The depression of 1937–39 unfortunately came too soon and wage reductions had to be fought by the union before an adequate organization structure was established. This enabled many employers to effect considerable cuts in the already meager incomes of textile workers. As soon as the depression receded, a new drive initiated by the T. W. O. C. effectively strengthened the local unions so that they were ready to resume their struggle for higher wages and better working conditions for textile workers both in the North and in the South.

Most important, the T. W. O. C. had survived the depression. For the first time in the history of textile labor, a union emerged from a depression nearly as strong and in some ways even stronger than it was at the start of the depression. In this way a solid basis was established for a permanent union. It was therefore decided to end the temporary form of the committee structure of the organization. Conventions were held by both the T. W. O. C. and the United Textile Workers of America in Philadelphia in May 1939, and the two organizations were consolidated to form the Textile Workers Union of America.

The industrial structure of the T. W. U. A. provides for a single union of workers comprising all the various branches of the textile industry engaged in the maufacturing and processing of textile goods. In addition to cotton textiles, where the bulk of the wage earners are employed, the union embraces workers producing woolen and worsted goods, synthetic yarn, silk and rayon goods, carpets and rugs, and knit goods. It also includes men and women engaged in dyeing, printing, and finishing textiles and in the manufacture of such textile products as hosiery and lace.



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At its second convention held in New York City on April 21, 1941, the Textile Workers Union of America reported substantial achievement in increasing wages and improving working conditions. The union has succeeded in inspiring a new confidence of textile workers in union organization as the vehicle for their economic advancement, in strengthening their faith in the democratic processes of collective bargaining, and in instilling in them an appreciation for the cumulative benefits resulting from a permanent organization.

## POLICY OF T. W. U. A.

Probably the most fundamental characteristic of the T. W. U. A. activities favoring development of a permanent union is its conception of what responsible unionism really means. The T. W. U. A. respects its obligations to both workers and employers and insists that local organizations also observe their pledges. The previous history of textile unionism is replete with incidents of the refusal of organized workers to accept contractual relations with their employers. They relied completely on economic strength. They forgot about the impending recessions following each spurt in business. As a result, organizations of textile workers flowed and ebbed, and improvements in their working conditions advanced and receded with the business tides.

To enable textile workers to maintain and solidify their gains, the T. W. U. A. formulated a new policy of employer-employee relations in the textile industry. It has adopted the written contract with employers as the best available method of fixing gains and stabilizing labor relations in the textile industry. These written agreements outline for a specified period of a year or two the status of the union, terms of employment, and the rights and responsibilities of workers and management in relation to each other and to the union.

The agreements also provide a mechanism which assures consideration and settlement of grievances. Under a contract workers know what they are entitled to, and are aware of the means of securing improvements. Employers too have profited from stable relations and established wage rates. This has had a salutary effect in substantially reducing cutthroat competition, at least in some branches of the textile industry. More and more employers have therefore come to accept collective bargaining as a substitute for continuous industrial conflict.

The union has campaigned vigorously for Federal wage and hour legislation. It has fought excessive work assignments and developed policies to protect workers through dismissal wage plans and adequate job transfer and personnel rehiring programs. It has also constantly been on the alert to obtain for textile labor its share in the improvements which have taken place in the textile industry as a whole.

Civil and industrial rights of textile workers have also been defended. Cases of discrimination because of union membership, company unionism, and the refusal on the part of a company to bargain collectively have been prosecuted before the National Labor Relations Board. Infringements of civil liberties have been vigorously fought to establish the fundamental rights of textile workers to free speech and to freedom of assembly. This fight against repression has been necessary to uproot fear and to establish a solid basis for union organization.

Winding Yarn From Bobbins Into Skeins

## ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Within the few years since its organization, the T. W. U. A. has brought substantial direct benefits to textile workers. Wage increases in the textile industry followed almost immediately the announcement of the formation of the T. W. O. C. to organize the textile industry. However, the 1937–38 depression and the lack of adequate organization both in the North and in the South enabled many cotton and woolen mills to reduce wages in the spring of 1938. The union proved its maturity by refusing to call a strike against these reductions because this course of action

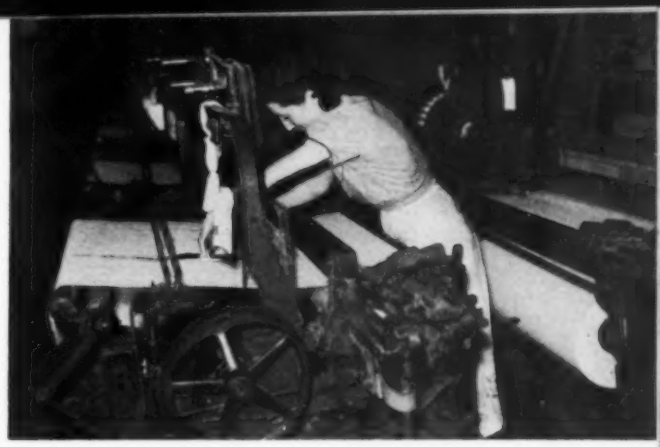
would have meant the liquidation of the union in many places for many years to come. It has, however, successfully resisted wage reductions in the rayon-yarn industry, and after a 7-week strike a reduction in the carpet and rug industry was limited to half of what the employers asked.

In the fall and winter of 1939 and 1940, the T. W. U. A. secured the full restoration of the carpet wage reduction and partial recovery in the wage cuts in the woolen and worsted and the northern cotton-textile branches of the industry. In the winter of 1940 and the spring of 1941, T. W. U. A. secured additional wage increases, which brought earnings in the textile industry to new heights.

The minimum wage, first of 32½ cents and more recently of 37½ cents, established under the Fair Labor Standards Act for the general textile industry has also proved exceedingly helpful in raising wages in the southern branch beyond the 1937 level. In the rayon branch, wages are now approximately 26 percent higher than they were before the T. W. O. C. drive was started in 1937.

With wage improvements working hours have been sharply limited so that textile employees now enjoy an 8-hour day and a 40-hour week. Those working on Saturdays, Sundays, and holidays are usually paid time and one-half. In marked contrast to the old system of having groups of workers report to the mill, only to find that no work is available on that day and return home empty handed, most contracts now guarantee 2 to 4 hours' pay to all employees who report for work. Split shifts are prohibited. Vacations with pay are provided in all rayon-yarn agreements, in practically all carpet and rug agreements, and in many dyeing and finishing contracts. Significant precedents for vacations with pay have also been established in the cotton and woolen mills. More than 100,000 workers now enjoy a week's vacation with pay by reason of T. W. U. A. agreements.

The workers are also protected against excessive work loads. Changes in work loads are now a matter to be decided through regular procedure of collective bargaining. Where the union does not approve of a revision in job assignments and no solution can be worked out, the case is submitted to arbitration. Workers on the job affected by technological changes are protected and assured higher earnings while displaced workers are given preferences for other jobs and dismissal wages.



Weaver Tying Broken Thread

All contracts provide for seniority and work-sharing regulations. Recently clauses have been inserted to guarantee the jobs and seniority of draftees. Specific provisions are included in contracts concerning the filing of grievances and the arrangement for arbitration of grievances not settled with management directly. Similarly, discharges of workers may be challenged and reviewed by the union and ultimately submitted to arbitration. Annual wage plans are provided in several contracts, and separation or dismissal allowances are assured in a number of agreements signed with employers.

## A PERMANENT INSTITUTION

The T. W. U. A. recognizes the need for effective administration of the union's affairs to establish a permanent organization. It knows that a trade-union will exist permanently only if it is prepared to represent the workers at all times in the mill, in the community, and before Government agencies; if it enforces its contractual obligations; and if it continues efficiently to organize the unorganized sectors of the industry. To assure the realization of these goals, the T. W. U. A. maintains a national staff of representatives in every organized and in a number of unorganized textile areas. These organizers are charged with the responsibility of assisting local unions attain a state of self-sufficiency in the handling of their daily problems. They guide the locals in the development of union procedures, of methods of enforcing their contract, in techniques for dues collection, and in habits of cooperation. They endeavor to bring each union to that degree of maturity where local union officials are able to conduct most of their affairs and require the aid

and guidance of national representatives only for the more difficult problems.

Where issues arise affecting wages, work loads, industrial management, financial status of corporations, or other similar economic and industrial problems, the research department of the national office is available to furnish analysis and aid. Legal problems are handled by the legal department of the national office. The publicity and educational departments have helped many local unions establish adequate local publicity machinery and varied educational activities. The secretary-treasurer's office maintains a staff of field accountants who audit local union books and who aid local groups in setting up their bookkeeping and accounting systems. The individual members of the T. W. U. A. are kept informed of the vast organization and its problems through the official monthly *Textile Labor* and a mimeographed semimonthly news summary entitled "Textile Facts."

To cement the feeling of unity among the local unions, conferences have been called both on a regional and industrial basis. The various carpet, rayon yarn, woolen and worsted, silk, and rayon locals have convened several times a year to review local conditions and industrial trends. Trade problems are discussed and common objectives are defined. Standards for contracts are formulated. Regional conferences have been held for New England, the Middle Atlantic States, the Southern, and the Middle Western States. Here the stress is placed on more general organizational problems and on the exchange of information so that the neighboring communities may become better acquainted and better able to assist one another.

# The Food Stamp Program In Operation

For more than a decade American farmers have been confronted with huge unmarketable surpluses of various farm products. During the same period millions of unemployed and destitute Americans have been compelled to subsist on inadequate diets because they could not buy the commodities which farmers had in abundance but could not sell. Since 1933 the Federal Government has made several attempts to solve this paradox of want amongst plenty. Soil-conservation and agricultural programs have reduced excessive plantings of certain crops. On the other hand, millions of workers have found employment in private industry and have thus acquired the purchasing power to buy more and better foods for themselves and their families.

But these constructive programs have only partly solved the twin problems of overproduction and underconsumption. Farmers still have large unprofitable surpluses of certain foodstuffs, and several million men and women are still unemployed and must be supported entirely or in large part by public or private funds.

The food stamp program has therefore been designed to help move the farm surpluses of foodstuffs into the homes of families who need them. The program accomplishes three important objectives: (1) It broadens the market for food products, thus helping the farmers. (2) It provides more adequate diets for needy families, thus helping the consumer and improving national standards of health and well-being. (3) It moves all surplus foods through the regular channels of trade, thus helping business.

## HOW THE PROGRAM WORKS

The program works very simply. In areas where it is in operation, families receiving public assistance may obtain a 50-percent increase in their food-buying power through the use of special surplus food order stamps.

Two kinds of stamps—orange and blue—are used. In order to obtain the extra food, families on relief must purchase from their local relief or welfare office orange-colored stamps in the approximate amounts they formerly spent in cash for food. With every dollar's worth of orange stamps bought, the relief family receives free approximately 50 cents worth of blue stamps. These blue stamps may be used only for the purchase of certain foods designated by the Secretary of Agriculture. These foodstuffs consist largely of dairy and poultry products, fruits and vegetables, and meats.

The orange-colored stamps are used to make sure that the family will continue to purchase as much food as it did before the stamp plan was started in the community. The free blue

stamps, however, represent a net increase in the amount of food which can be bought and consumed by families on relief.

Both types of stamps are accepted at their cash values by grocery stores. The stores in turn may cash the stamps at their local bank or use them to pay wholesale grocers. It is important to emphasize that the foods thus move from the farms to consumers entirely through normal channels of trade, and no attempts are made to regulate or fix the prices of the commodities.

## WHAT ARE "BLUE STAMP" FOODS

The commodities which may be purchased with the blue stamps vary from time to time, depending upon seasonal and other economic factors affecting the supply of farm products. The first

A Blue Surplus Food Order Stamp

blue-stamp list in the spring of 1939 included butter, eggs, white and graham flour, corn meal, dry beans, oranges, grapefruit, and dried prunes. Other commodities which have appeared on the list include rice, potatoes, cabbage, onions, lard, and various pork products, and a number of fresh vegetables in the summer of 1940. Most of these foodstuffs are extremely valuable, as they contain large proportions of the nutritious elements needed in a healthy diet.

During the last 10 months, from July 1, 1940, to April 30, 1941, families on relief purchased with their blue stamps approximately 33,000,000 dozen eggs, 25,000,000 pounds of butter, 228,000,000 pounds of flour, 104,000,000 pounds of vegetables, other than potatoes, and 131,000,000 pounds of pork and pork products. On the basis of every dollar's worth of blue stamps spent by relief families in April 1941, about 31 cents was spent for pork and lard, 28 cents for butter and eggs, 15 cents for cereals, and 26 cents for fruits, vegetables, and potatoes.

## GROWTH OF PROGRAM

Started on an experimental basis in Rochester, N. Y., in May 1939, the food stamp program proved so successful that it has been extended to over 300 cities and areas scattered throughout the United States. Nearly 4 million single persons and persons in families receiving public aid are now using the free blue stamps to buy farm commodities. In May 1940, about 1½ million persons were covered by the plan according to the Surplus Marketing Administration.

The food stamp program is in effect in nearly all the important industrial cities in which relief population is concentrated, and also in a large number of small cities and rural areas throughout the Nation. It also operates on a State-wide basis in Arizona, Nevada, New Mexico, Oregon, Utah, and Washington. The program is now operating in areas containing nearly 50 percent of the total population of the country.

Participation of cities and States in the program is based upon the willingness of their welfare agencies, public officials, banks, and other local groups to support the program and help make it operate successfully. This cooperation has been forthcoming in the overwhelming majority of localities where the program has been introduced. Retail stores, especially, have cooperated wholeheartedly. They have increased the volume of their sales and report little if any inconvenience through the use of orange and blue stamps in making sales to families on relief.

It is the firm policy of the Government that the stamp plan shall be used to supplement local relief and not as a substitute for such relief. Local welfare agencies handling relief clients must therefore sign a contract with the Surplus Marketing Administration agreeing that regular relief payments to families will not be reduced under the food stamp program. This is to assure that the increased purchasing power provided by the distribution of the free blue stamps will not be offset by reductions in the amount of the regular relief given needy families, and that the fundamental objectives of the plan to increase the consumption of farm products by providing greater quantities of nourishing foods for families on relief are carried out.

# Rate of Operations in Defense Industries, March 1941

During the 3-month period between the middle of December 1940 and the middle of March of this year, 363 important manufacturing establishments in 11 key defense industries increased their labor force by over 62,000 workers, or about 14 percent.[1] Approximately half of this increase, according to a Bureau of Labor Statistics survey, was accomplished by adding workers to the second or third shift of plant operations. The most pronounced gains in extra shift employment were recorded in the manufacture of explosives, machine tools, and machine-tool accessories.

Out of a total of 587 plants employing over 600,000 workers, covered by the March study of the number of shifts operated, extent of overtime, and week-end activity, 338 plants operated on three shifts and only 72 confined their work to a single shift per day. Despite the large proportion of plants operating on more than 1 shift, most wage earners were employed on the first shift. Overtime work was widespread, and many establishments also operated on a small scale on Saturdays and Sundays.

*Number of Shifts.*—More than half of the 587 plants covered operated on a 3-shift basis, and 177 maintained 2 shifts. Few establishments, on the other hand, reported full rate of operations on the second and third shifts. Thus, 72 percent of all the workers were employed on the first shift, 20 percent on the second, and 8 percent on the third. In many instances the extra shifts were used only to eliminate backlogs and jams in production arising from heavy operations on the first shift and to make necessary repairs

In industries where the manufacturing process is continuous, virtually all the plants surveyed operated on a 24-hour basis. In smelting and refining, all the 39 reporting establishments were on a 3-shift schedule, as were 87 of the 89 chemical plants and 41 of the 48 brass, bronze, and copper establishments.

Among the 177 plants operating on a 2-shift basis only 29 employed as much as 30 percent of their total labor force on the second shift. These establishments were largely confined to the machine-tool, shipbuilding, and electrical machinery industries.

*Overtime.*—Approximately 373,000 workers, or more than 60 percent of the total number included in the survey, were reported as working overtime. Each of these workers averaged nearly 10 hours of overtime during the sample week in the middle of March. Their total overtime aggregated approximately 3,650,000 hours, which is equivalent to more than 91,000 additional employees working 40 hours per week.

Practically all of the workers in establishments manufacturing machine tools and machine-tool accessories averaged more than 12 hours of overtime per week. More than half of the workers producing firearms accumulated over 12 hours of overtime each. In engines (other than aircraft), private shipyards, electrical machinery, brass, bronze, and copper, and aluminum establishments, weekly overtime averaged from 8 to 11 hours per worker.

*Week-End Operations.*—Approximately two-thirds of the average number of workers employed during the week were reported on the job for Saturday operations. This compares with only about 10 percent of the average weekday force working on Sunday. Although only 89 of the 587 plants shut down completely over the week end, most of the remaining establishments operated with only skeleton forces to make necessary repairs and to operate "bottleneck" departments.

The highest ratio of week-end operations occurred in smelting and refining plants, where approximately three-fourths of the wage earners were at work on Saturday and slightly more than half on Sunday. In chemical manufacturing plants almost half the regular weekday force was employed on Saturday and one-third on Sunday. In these two industries staggered shifts are widely used, in order to attain continuous operation without lengthening the workweek of employees.

The machine-tool and machine-tool-accessories plants came closest to achieving full 6-day operation. In machine-tool plants, 88 percent of the wage earners were at work on Saturday and in machine-tool-accessories plants 79 percent were at work on Saturday.

[1] *The 11 defense industries covered by the December 1940 study were: Ammunition, brass, bronze and copper products, electrical machinery, apparatus and supplies, engines (other than aircraft), explosives, firearms, machine tools, machine-tool accessories, shipbuilding, and smelting and refining. The March 1941 study also included reports from establishments in the chemical industry.*

# Business and Economic Conditions in May 1941

*National Income.*—The Department of Commerce estimates May income payments at nearly 6.9 billion dollars, as against approximately 5.8 billion dollars in May of last year. For the first five months of 1941 income payments of 33.8 billion dollars were about 16 percent larger than in the same period of last year.

*Farm Income.*—Cash income of farmers including Government payments advanced to $773,000,000 in May, as against $704,000,000 in the preceding month and $620,000,000 in May 1940.

*Automobiles.*—About 518,700 passenger cars and trucks were assembled in May. This was an increase of 56,400 compared with April. It was also 127,500 greater than in May a year ago.

*Bituminous Coal.*—Output of bituminous coal increased from about 6,000,000 tons in April to 43,400,000 tons in May, with the resumption of operations at most mines. In May 1940 production totaled about 34,900,000 tons.

*Building Construction.*—Reports from 2,099 cities indicate that building permits valued at approximately $271,350,000 were issued in May, as against $292,200,000 in April and $205,500,000 in May 1940.

*Electric Power.*—Output of electric power totaled nearly 13,300 million kilowatt hours in May. This compares with 12,680 million kilowatt hours in the preceding month and 11,430 million kilowatt hours in May of last year.

*Railroad Freight-Car Loadings.*—Class I railroads loaded on the average 832,000 cars of freight per week during May, as against 698,500 cars per week in April and 674,000 cars per week in May a year ago.

*Steel.*—Slightly more than 7,100,000 tons of steel ingots were produced in May. This was an increase of approximately 344,000 tons compared with April and of 2,134,000 tons compared with May 1940.

## Trend of Industrial Production

Output of factories and mines rose sharply in May following the slight decline recorded in April. The Federal Reserve Board's adjusted index advanced to 149, as against 140 in April and 115 in May of last year. Industrial production in May was almost 50 percent larger than average output for the 5 years 1935–39.

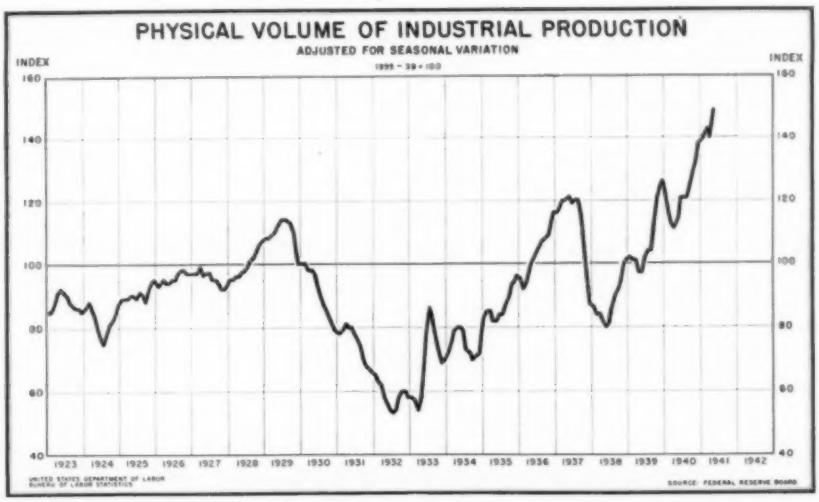
Further increases were recorded in machinery, aircraft, and shipbuilding industries. Output of cotton, woolen, and rayon textiles, shoes, chemicals, and manufactured foods also continued to rise. Production of automobiles, anthracite, and bituminous coal, which declined during April, rose markedly in May.

**Industrial Production**
**Adjusted Index**

1935–39=100

| | |
|---|---|
| *1941* | |
| May | [1] 150 |
| April | 140 |
| March | 143 |
| February | 141 |
| January | 140 |
| *1940* | |
| December | 139 |
| November | 133 |
| October | 129 |
| September | 125 |
| August | 121 |
| July | 121 |
| June | 121 |
| May | 115 |

[1] *Preliminary.*



# Employment and Pay Rolls in May 1941

Resumption of work in the bituminous-coal industry, following the suspension of operations in April, accounted for about half of the increase of slightly more than 600,000 in nonagricultural employment in May. Factory employment again rose sharply, with 162,000 workers added to the pay rolls of manufacturing industries during the month.

Other gains in employment were 71,000 in transportation and public utilities, 69,000 in Federal, State, and local Government services, and 60,000 in financial and service establishments. Slightly fewer workers, on the other hand, were employed in retail and wholesale trade and on construction projects, where completion of many new Army cantonments more than offset advances in employment in other lines of building activity.

The substantial increase in nonagricultural employment in May marked the second successive month in which the number of workers employed in all industries except agriculture established a new peak. Total employment in these industries of 38,278,000 was also more than 3,100,000 larger than in May of last year.

Preliminary data collected by the Bureau of Labor Statistics indicate that nearly 1,000,000 workers obtained increases in their rates of pay during May. In manufacturing, over 600,000 workers received increases which averaged slightly more than 9 percent. Large numbers of workers in woolen and worsted goods, electrical machinery, meat packing, steel, agricultural implements, foundries and machine shops, and chemicals were reported as receiving increases in their rates of pay. In addition, the new wage scale established in bituminous coal mining resulted in an upward adjustment in wages of about 18 percent for the major portion of the 400,000 workers employed in this industry.

## DURABLE-GOODS INDUSTRIES

*Employment.*—Slightly more than 127,000 workers were added to the pay rolls of durable-goods manufacturing industries in May. The largest increase was recorded in machinery manufacturing and totaled 51,000. Other gains in employment ranged from 2,300 in nonferrous metals to 28,100 in iron and steel.

*Estimated employment and pay rolls in manufacturing industries*

[May 1941, April 1941, and May 1940]

| Industry | Number of workers employed | | | Amount of weekly pay roll | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | May 1941[1] | April 1941[2] | May 1940 | May 1941[1] | April 1941[2] | May 1940 |
| **All industries** | **9,845,700** | **9,682,800** | **8,090,400** | **$269,152,000** | **$255,781,000** | **$185,564,000** |
| *Durable-goods groups*[3] | *5,046,600* | *4,919,300* | *3,820,200* | *159,461,000* | *150,322,000* | *98,901,000* |
| Iron and steel | 1,182,400 | 1,154,300 | 909,100 | 40,452,000 | 38,350,000 | 24,718,000 |
| Machinery | 1,437,200 | 1,386,200 | 1,008,700 | 51,814,000 | 47,222,000 | 29,148,000 |
| Transportation equipment | 963,000 | 936,700 | 657,700 | 33,952,000 | 32,946,000 | 20,394,000 |
| Nonferrous metals | 348,500 | 346,200 | 262,600 | 10,885,000 | 10,302,000 | 6,797,000 |
| Lumber | 679,100 | 671,500 | 619,100 | 14,263,000 | 13,849,000 | 11,584,000 |
| Stone, clay, glass | 335,400 | 325,900 | 287,200 | 8,611,000 | 8,089,000 | 6,623,000 |
| *Nondurable-goods groups* | *4,799,100* | *4,763,500* | *4,270,200* | *109,691,000* | *105,459,000* | *86,663,000* |
| Textiles | 1,830,800 | 1,827,400 | 1,563,700 | 34,951,000 | 33,930,000 | 24,683,000 |
| Leather | 309,500 | 316,900 | 280,600 | 6,358,000 | 6,449,000 | 4,443,000 |
| Food | 848,500 | 823,200 | 808,500 | 20,433,000 | 19,031,000 | 18,429,000 |
| Tobacco | 89,700 | 87,900 | 86,100 | 1,477,000 | 1,315,000 | 1,351,000 |
| Paper and printing | 641,800 | 634,100 | 611,000 | 18,566,000 | 18,025,000 | 16,813,000 |
| Chemicals | 441,000 | 445,600 | 399,800 | 13,440,000 | 12,979,000 | 11,065,000 |
| Rubber | 142,900 | 141,200 | 112,500 | 4,481,000 | 4,249,000 | 3,021,000 |
| Unclassified | 494,900 | 487,200 | 408,000 | 9,985,000 | 9,481,000 | 6,858,000 |

[1] *Preliminary.* [2] *Revised.*

[3] *Adjusted to actual levels shown by 1939 Census of Manufactures. Due to overlapping, the figures obtained by adding the separate group totals are somewhat larger.*

Durable-goods employment this May was also 1,226,000 larger than in May of last year. All groups of industries reported increased employment, with the largest advances aggregating 428,500 in machinery manufacturing, and 305,300 in transportation equipment.

*Weekly Pay Rolls.*—The May weekly pay roll in durable-goods manufacturing was $9,140,000 larger than in April. All groups of industries reported larger weekly wage payments, with increases varying in amounts from $414,000 in lumber to nearly $4,600,000 in machinery manufacturing.

Over the year interval May 1940 to May 1941, aggregate weekly wage payments in durable-goods manufacturing advanced by nearly $60,600,000. Of this total machinery manufacturing accounted for $22,700,000, iron and steel $15,700,000, and transportation equipment $13,600,000.

## NONDURABLE-GOODS INDUSTRIES

*Employment.*—The food processing and manufacturing industry reported a gain of 25,300 workers in May. This increase together with smaller increases in all remaining nondurable-goods groups of industries except leather and chemicals resulted in an employment advance of 35,600 in nondurable-goods manufacturing.

Approximately 529,000 more workers had jobs in nondurable-goods employment this May than in the corresponding month a year ago. About half of this increase (267,100) was recorded in textiles.

*Weekly Pay Rolls.*—With the exception of a reduction of $91,000 per week in the pay roll of the leather industry, all nondurable-goods groups reported larger total weekly wage payments in May than in April. The largest increases aggregated $1,400,000 in foodstuffs and $1,020,000 in textiles. For all nondurable-goods groups combined, May weekly pay rolls rose $4,232,000.

Over the year May 1940 to May 1941, weekly pay rolls in nondurable-goods manufacturing rose slightly more than $23,000,000. The increases ranged from $126,000 in tobacco and $1,460,000 in rubber to $2,375,000 in chemicals and $10,268,000 in textiles.

## Trend of Employment and Pay Rolls in Manufacturing Industries

Factory employment increased 1.6 percent in May and averaged nearly 22 percent higher than in May a year ago. The Bureau of Labor Statistics index of employment in manufacturing industries advanced to 124.7 in May, compared with 122.7 in the preceding month, 102.5 in May 1940, and 100 as the average for 1923–25.

Weekly pay rolls in manufacturing industries rose about 5 percent in May. They were 45 percent above May of last year. Over the 12 months May 1940 to May 1941, aggregate weekly pay rolls increased 61 percent in durable-goods industries and 26.5 percent in nondurable-goods industries.

**Factory Pay-Roll Index**

1923-25=100

| | |
|---|---|
| *1941* | |
| May | [1] 141.9 |
| April | 134.8 |
| March | 131.0 |
| February | 126.9 |
| January | 120.7 |
| *1940* | |
| December | 122.4 |
| November | 116.5 |
| October | 116.2 |
| September | 111.6 |
| August | 105.5 |
| July | 98.2 |
| June | 99.5 |
| May | 97.8 |

[1] *Preliminary.*

## Hours of Work and Earnings in Manufacturing Industries

Employment in manufacturing industries averaged nearly 41 hours per week in May. This was an increase of nearly 1 hour per week compared with the preceding month and of about 3½ hours compared with May of last year. Hourly earnings in May averaged 72½ cents, which was slightly higher than in April and about 6 cents an hour higher than a year ago. Weekly earnings of factory workers averaged $30.70 in May—an increase of about 75 cents per week compared with April and of $5.30 per week compared with May 1940.

In the five selected durable- and nondurable-goods manufacturing industries average weekly hours of work and average hourly and weekly earnings in May 1941 were:

*Durable-goods manufacturing*

Weekly hours:
- 45.5 in foundries and machine shops.
- 41.0 in automobiles.
- 40.5 in blast furnaces and rolling mills.
- 38.5 in sawmills.
- 38.5 in brick manufacturing.

Hourly earnings:
- $1.01½ in automobiles.
- $0.97 in blast furnaces and rolling mills.
- $0.80 in foundries and machine shops.
- $0.63½ in brick manufacturing.
- $0.53½ in sawmills.

Weekly earnings:
- $41.70 in automobiles.
- $39.05 in blast furnaces and rolling mills.
- $36.20 in foundries and machine shops.
- $24.50 in brick manufacturing.
- $20.75 in sawmills.

*Nondurable-goods manufacturing*

Weekly hours:
- 43.0 in paper and pulp.
- 40.5 in slaughtering and meat packing.
- 39.5 in cotton-goods manufacturing.
- 38.5 in tires and inner tubes.
- 37.0 in petroleum refining.

Hourly earnings:
- $1.01 in tires and inner tubes.
- $1.00½ in petroleum refining.
- $0.73 in slaughtering and meat packing.
- $0.67½ in paper and pulp.
- $0.45 in cotton-goods manufacturing.

Weekly earnings:
- $38.95 in tires and inner tubes.
- $37.15 in petroleum refining.
- $29.55 in slaughtering and meat packing.
- $29.05 in paper and pulp.
- $17.85 in cotton-goods manufacturing.

## Employment, Pay Rolls, Wages, and Hours in Selected Nonmanufacturing Industries

| Item | May 1941 [1] | Increase or decrease | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | April 1941 to May 1941 | May 1940 to May 1941 |
| *Retail trade* | | *Percent* | *Percent* |
| Employment | 3,676,300 | −1.8 | +5.3 |
| Weekly pay roll | $80,204,000 | −.2 | +9.7 |
| Weekly hours | 42.5 | (2) | −.5 |
| Hourly earnings | $0.56 | +1.9 | +4.9 |
| Weekly earnings | $21.90 | +1.6 | +4.3 |
| *Wholesale trade* | | | |
| Employment | 1,481,400 | −.2 | +3.8 |
| Weekly pay roll | $48,972,000 | +1.5 | +9.4 |
| Weekly hours | 41.5 | +.7 | +.1 |
| Hourly earnings | $0.78 | +1.0 | +6.1 |
| Weekly earnings | $31.90 | +1.6 | +5.3 |
| *Bituminous coal* [3] | | | |
| Employment | 412,400 | +282.0 | +5.6 |
| Weekly pay roll | $10,966,000 | +528.4 | +31.8 |
| Weekly hours | 30.0 | +31.9 | +13.8 |
| Hourly earnings | $0.97 | +15.7 | +9.0 |
| Weekly earnings | $29.65 | +64.5 | +17.9 |
| *Metal mining* | | | |
| Employment | 86,100 | +1.5 | +13.2 |
| Week y pay roll | $2,682,000 | +4.1 | +24.6 |
| Weekly hours | 42.0 | +1.6 | +.8 |
| Hourly earnings | $0.79 | +1.0 | +9.2 |
| Weekly earnings | $32.90 | +2.6 | +10.0 |
| *Telephone and telegraph* | | | |
| Employment | 426,600 | +1.7 | +9.5 |
| Weekly pay roll | $13,778,000 | +2.0 | +10.5 |
| Weekly hours | 40.0 | (2) | +1.2 |
| Hourly earnings | 0.80 | +.1 | −.5 |
| Weekly earnings | $31.65 | +.2 | +.9 |
| *Power and light* | | | |
| Employment | 253,300 | +1.1 | +1.9 |
| Weekly pay roll | $9,185,000 | +2.5 | +5.8 |
| Weekly hours | 40.0 | +.8 | −.1 |
| Hourly earnings | $0.91 | +.8 | +4.1 |
| Weekly earnings | $36.45 | +1.4 | +3.8 |
| *Street railways and busses* | | | |
| Employment | 193,300 | +1.0 | +.8 |
| Weekly pay roll | $6,796,000 | +1.3 | +5.4 |
| Weekly hours | 46.5 | +.2 | +3.1 |
| Hourly earnings | $0.73 | +.2 | +1.9 |
| Weekly earnings | $34.50 | +.3 | +4.5 |
| *Hotels* | | | |
| Employment | 282,500 | +1.6 | +3.6 |
| Weekly pay roll | $4,384,000 | +1.5 | +6.6 |
| Weekly hours | 44.5 | −1.4 | −2.1 |
| Hourly earnings | $0.34 | +1.4 | +4.6 |
| Weekly earnings | $15.85 | −.1 | +2.9 |
| *Laundries* | | | |
| Employment | 250,500 | +3.4 | +9.4 |
| Weekly pay roll | $4,305,000 | +3.2 | +11.7 |
| Weekly hours | 43.5 | −.2 | +1.1 |
| Hourly earnings | $0.44 | +.5 | +1.7 |
| Weekly earnings | $18.95 | −.2 | +2.2 |
| *Dyeing and cleaning* | | | |
| Employment | 70,700 | +3.0 | +11.0 |
| Weekly pay roll | $1,380,000 | −2.2 | +12.0 |
| Weekly hours | 44.5 | −2.5 | +.7 |
| Hourly earnings | $0.50 | −2.8 | +.1 |
| Weekly earnings | $21.75 | −5.1 | +.8 |

[1] *Preliminary.* [2] *No change.*
[3] *April 1941 data affected by work stoppage.*

# Government Employment and Relief in May 1941

*Work Projects.*—Approximately 1,450,000 persons were employed in May on projects operated by the Work Projects Administration. This was a decline in employment of about 120,000 compared with April and of about 400,000 compared with May 1940. Total wage disbursements of $86,500,000 in May were $5,800,000 smaller than in the preceding month and $24,000,000 smaller than in May of last year.

*Construction Projects.*—Employment and earnings at the site of construction on Government projects in May were:

| Project | Employment | Earnings |
|---|---|---|
| All construction projects | 926, 500 | $117, 200, 000 |
| Regular Federal Government appropriations | 809, 400 | 107, 600, 000 |
| Financed by Work Projects Administration | 54, 000 | 2, 600, 000 |
| United States Housing Authority | 42, 600 | 4, 500, 000 |
| Public Works Administration | 11, 200 | 1, 200, 000 |
| Reconstruction Finance Corporation | 9, 300 | 1, 300, 000 |

*C. C. C. and N. Y. A.*—The Civilian Conservation Corps employed 261,000 enrolled workers, camp supervisors, and instructors in May at a total pay roll of $12,240,000. The National Youth Administration provided jobs to 863,000 boys and girls, who earned about $11,600,000.

*General Relief.*—About 424,500 families and single persons in 19 urban areas received $12,900,000 in relief in May. This was a decline of 6.6 percent in cases and 6.7 percent in funds disbursed compared with April.

*Federal Service.*—Employment and earnings in the Federal Government in May were:

| Service | Employment | Earnings |
|---|---|---|
| Executive [1] | 1, 306, 000 | $198, 400, 000 |
| Military | 1, 662, 000 | 96, 300, 000 |
| Legislative | 6, 100 | 1, 330, 000 |
| Judicial | 2, 500 | 643, 000 |

[1] *Includes about 177,900 force account, supervisory, and technical employees with a total pay roll of $26,800,000 shown under other classifications.*

# Cost of Living in June 1941

Living costs of wage earners and clerical workers in large cities rose 1.7 percent between mid-May and mid-June. They were about 4.1 percent higher than in June of last year. Higher prices for many foodstuffs combined with increases in the cost of some articles of clothing and housefurnishings have contributed largely to the rise in the cost of living in recent months. In some areas, also, rents have risen sharply.

The cost of foods which ordinarily constitute about one-third of the wage earner's budget rose markedly in May. In 9 of the 20 cities surveyed, increases in food prices averaged more than 4 percent. Egg prices rose substantially, and prices of lard, pork, and dairy products and navy beans also increased markedly over the month. Vegetable prices advanced more than usual for this season of the year, partly because of bad weather conditions in some agricultural areas. Coffee and tea also rose in price over the month.

The cost of work shirts, work trousers, overalls, and work shoes continued the upward movement of preceding months. Substantial increases in prices were also reported in many localities for suites of furniture and for refrigerators.

### Increases in Wholesale Prices

The recent increases in retail prices of various foods as well as of articles manufactured from such basic commodities as steel, copper, wool, etc., reflect in many instances earlier changes in the wholesale prices. The Bureau of Labor Statistics index covering approximately 900 products sold at wholesale was 8 percent higher in June than in January of this year and 12.4 percent higher than in June 1940.

The sharp rise in wholesale commodity prices which has occurred since the first of the year has been due in part to heavy demands for materials necessary for the production of armament and to shortages of certain important materials. Other factors, including scarcity of imported materials

have also contributed to the rise in average wholesale prices.

Among the commodities imported into the United States, products normally received from Central Europe or Scandinavia have become unobtainable, and wholesale prices of these commodities have increased very rapidly. Even where supplies have not been cut off entirely, the shipping shortage is being felt with increasing force.

Sharp increases in shipping rates have affected the prices of all goods which have to be transported by water. Thus it costs three times as much to bring sugar to the United States from Cuba as it did before the war. Even purely domestic products have been affected. The cost of shipping fuel oil, and gasoline from the Gulf Coast to the North Atlantic Seaboard has increased, and this has been reflected in higher prices to consumers for these products on the East Coast.

The difficulty of securing adequate imports of fats and oils such as palm oil, copra, and tung oil has increased the demand for domestic fats and oils, such as cottonseed oil, lard, and tallow. As a result, wholesale prices of these domestic products have increased from 68 to 115 percent since the beginning of 1941.

## Cost of Living in 20 Large Cities

| Area and city | Index as of June 15, 1941 (1935-39 = 100) | Percentage increase (+) or decrease (−) | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | May 15, 1941, to June 15, 1941 | Aug. 15, 1939, to June 15, 1941 |
| Average for 34 cities | 104.6 | +1.7 | +6.1 |
| North Atlantic: | | | |
| Boston | 102.5 | +1.3 | +5.6 |
| Buffalo | 107.3 | +1.7 | +8.9 |
| New York | 104.5 | +1.9 | +5.6 |
| Philadelphia | 103.3 | +1.6 | +5.6 |
| Pittsburgh | 105.2 | +1.7 | +6.9 |
| South Atlantic: | | | |
| Baltimore | 105.9 | +2.0 | +7.3 |
| Savannah | 105.0 | +1.6 | +5.7 |
| North Central: | | | |
| Chicago | 104.8 | +1.5 | +6.2 |
| Cincinnati | 104.0 | +2.0 | +6.9 |
| Cleveland | 106.2 | +1.8 | +6.2 |
| Detroit | 106.4 | +2.8 | +8.0 |
| Kansas City | 101.8 | +1.4 | +3.2 |
| Minneapolis | 105.6 | +1.6 | +5.9 |
| St. Louis | 104.1 | +2.0 | +6.1 |
| South Central: | | | |
| Birmingham | 105.5 | +2.4 | +7.1 |
| Houston | 104.0 | +0.5 | +3.3 |
| Western: | | | |
| Denver | 102.9 | +1.3 | +4.4 |
| Los Angeles | 105.7 | +1.2 | +5.2 |
| San Francisco | 105.4 | +1.2 | +6.1 |
| Seattle | 107.2 | +1.1 | +6.9 |



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